

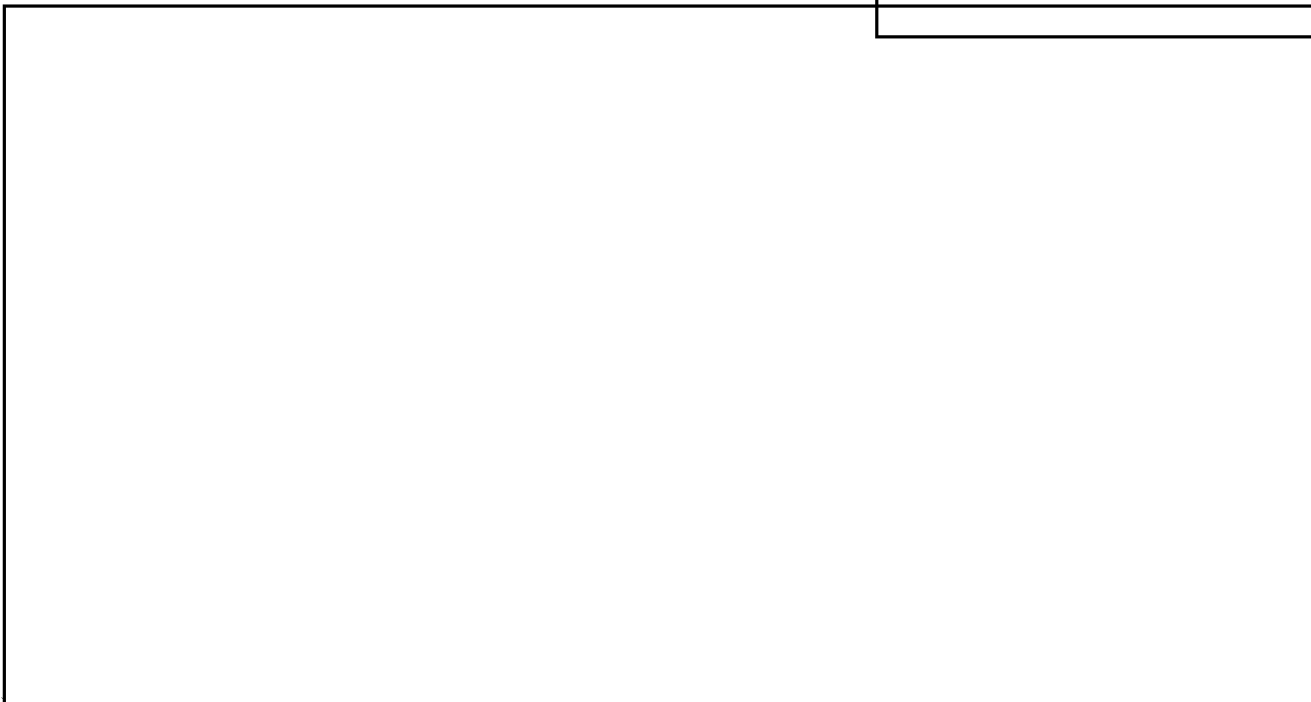
NSC BRIEFING

5 December 1958

MIDDLE EAST

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I. Iraqi situation is the area's most critical,



- 1. It seems likely Qasim will rely more heavily than ever on Communists, who are his major source of organized "popular" support.**
- 2. Qasim has not approached us or, as far as we know, any of our allies for support. British apparently expect serious trouble and are considering evacuation of their nationals from Iraq.**



DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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2. Iraqi civilian sentiment is almost certainly divided on attitudes toward Nasir and association with UAR, although there is no real anti-Nasir sentiment.

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II. In Sudan, situation still unsettled following army coup there.

A. Prime Minister Khalil, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is not wielding

the influence behind the scenes which he and his supporters hoped and expected he would.

B. While General Abbud's regime apparently intends to defend Sudanese interests vigorously and has given clear-cut approval to the proposed American aid program, it also feels compelled to make friendly gestures toward Nasir and to adopt some of the postures of the Arab neutralist bloc. (Sudan has recognized Communist China.)

C. As in Iraq, further changes ^{UN/}as the Sudanese government seem likely as the new regime shakes down, and as elements now out of the picture try to regain some of their influence.

III. There appear to be difficulties ahead in Libya, where we have our large Wheelus Field airbase.

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B. The Crown Prince and a number of relatively pro-Western Libyan officials are disgruntled over Idriss' failure to move against subversive elements or to give them power to do so.

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C.

the Libyan

situation is basically unstable and the death or disability of the King would very likely trigger an attempt by pro-Nasir and pro-Soviet elements to seize power.

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D. Premier Kubaar on 30 November publicly promised to try to renegotiate the Libyan-American aid and base agreements. Kubaar said privately he wants a straight rental arrangement

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IV. In Jordan, King Husayn is still hanging on, and the government has lifted martial law in an effort to give itself a psychological boost.

A. However, essentially equivalent powers remain in effect.

B. Meanwhile, Husayn is giving the UN representative in Amman a "last chance" to prove that the UN can "do something" to ease pressures on Jordan.

V. Nasir too seems to have troubles, especially in Syria where businessmen and landlords have been dismayed by enforcement of land reform and by other Egyptian-inspired economic policies.

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- A. Partly in answer to this grumbling and possibly because he feels his regime has not been "going anywhere" lately, Nasir last week outlined his vision of the UAR as a "democratic socialist" society, emphasizing economic development and lacing his speech with statistics.
 - B. During same speech, he again bitterly attacked the US, and claimed privately that because of "leaks" to the American press of his attitude toward Iraq, he could never again deal frankly with US representatives.
 - C. However, Nasir subsequently has indicated through an intermediary that he wishes to buy wheat from the US rather than the USSR. Ambassador Hare has been instructed to follow up this approach in order to test the reality of Nasir's long-standing assertion of wish to improve relations with us.
- IV. Israel may be adopting a more belligerent attitude on its border problems.
- A. Decision to take 3 December clash with Syrians to UN looks like building a record to which Israelis can point if they should later decide to make direct "retaliation."
 - B. Air and army attaches in Tel Aviv have reported growing sentiment in Israel's army recently that some type action required.

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